

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 0587

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (E.O. TAGS AND SUBJ LINES)

KUWAIT PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OTRA, PFOR, IS, CA

SUBJECT: MACEACHEN VISIT TO ISRAEL.

GQM SUMMARY: CANADIAN EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SECRETARY ALLAN MACEACHEN VISITED ISRAEL FROM JAN. 18 TO 21 AT THE END OF A MIDDLE EAST TOUR FOR A DISCUSSION OF CURRENT POLITICAL/ MILITARY SITUATION AND BILATERAL ISSUES. MACEACHEN'S STATED POSITION ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE REMAINS SHARPLY DIVERGENT FROM THE ISRAELI POSITION, BUT THE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THIS AND OTHER SUBJECTS TOOK PLACE IN AN AMICABLE MANNER. THE MFA DESCRIBES THE STATE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN CANADA AND ISRAEL AS "EXCELLENT". END SUMMARY.

2. I RECEIVED A FILL-IN ON JANUARY 21 FROM MFA DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL EVRON (HIMSELF A FORMER AMBASSADOR TO CONFIDENTIAL

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CANADA) ON THE MACEACHEN VISIT WHICH HAD ENDED EARLIER

THAT DAY, EVRON SIAD THAT THE BILATEAL ISSUES WERE CHIEFLY CONCERNED WITH ECONOMIC MATTERS, INCLUDING IMPROVED COMMERCIAL TIES AND INCREASE OF ISRAELI EXPORTS TO CANADA (THE IMBALANCE IS IN CANADA'S FAVOR). ONE KNOTTY ISSUE WHICH HAD NOT BEEN RESOLVED WAS THE DESIRE OF EL AL TO OBTAIN MORE LANDING RIGHTS IN CANADA MACEACHEN AND ISRAELI FONMIN YIGAL ALLON HAD DECIDED THAT THIS ISSUE SHOULD BE DISCUSSED BY PRESIDENTS OF EL AL AND CANADIAN PACIFIC AIRLINES BEFORE GOVERNMENTS ATTEMPT TO REACH AGGAEMENT.

3. MOST OF THE DISCUSSION WITH BOTH PRIME MINISTER RABIN AND ALLON WAS DEVOTED TO MIDDLE EAST ISSUES. (MACEACHEN'S PREVIOUS STOP HAD BEEN IN IRAQ AND HE HAD ALSO VISITED JORDAN, SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT). THE CANADIAN EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SECRETARY TOLD THE ISRAELIS THAT AS A RESULT OF HIS VISITS IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES HE SENSED THAT THE CLIMATE FOR A SETTLEMENT WITH ISRAEL WAS IMPROVING, IF A SETTLEMENT WRE BASED ON THE ARAB INTERPRETATION OF 242 AND ON AN ACCEPTANCE OF THE NATIONAL RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIANS. WHEN MACEACHEN ASKED THE PRIME MINISTER FOR HIS VIEWS ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE,,ABIN GAVE HIM HIS NORMAL PITCH (I.E. NO THIRD STATE AND RESOLUTION OF PALESTINIAN ISSUE IN CONTEXT OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN); MACEACHEN WAS SAID TO HAVE INDICATED THAT HE WAS NOT PERSUADED BY RABIN'S ARGUEMENTS. BOTH RABIN AND ALLON HAD EXPLAINED TO MACEACHEN WHY THEY BELIEVE THAT THE GRADUAL APPROACH FAVORED BY SECRETARY KISSINGER IS THE ONLY PRACTICAL ONE UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSANCES. RABIN HAD, IN ADDITION, STRESSED HIS CONVICTION THAT THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM WAS NOT THE PALEEZINIAN ISSUE BUT THE REFUSAL OF THE ARABS TO ACCEPT THE STATE OF ISRAEL.

4. RABIN ASKED MACEACHEN IF SADAT HAD DEFINED FOR HIM THE WORD "PEACE"
AS SADAT USED IT. MACEACHEN REPLIED THAT SADAT HAD NOT DEFINED THE TERM, WHICH LED TO RABIN'S EXPLANATION OF THE TWO KINDS OF PEACE IN THE ARAB LEXICON. AS FOR THE ISRAELIS, HE SAID, THEY COULD ACCEPT THE "KIND OF ARMISTICE" WHICH SADAT SEEMED TO FAVOR, AND FOR SUCH A STATE OF NO CONFIDENTIAL

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WAR ISRAEL WOULD BE READY TO MAKE TERRITORIAL SACRIFICES BUT NOT NEARLY AS GREAT AS IT WOULD MAKE FOR A TRUE PEACE.

5. MACEACHEN TOLD THE ISRAELIS THAT SADAT HAD URGED CANADIAN RECOGNITION OF THE PLO. HE SAID HE HAD REPLIED THAT CANADA COULD RECOGNIZE THE PLO AS ONE OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE BUT NOT THE REPRESENTATIVE. (EVRON SAID THAT ALLON HAD NOTED WITH INTEREST THAT IN HIS COMMENTS

MACEACHEN HAD REFERRED TO THE "LEGITIMATE INTERESTS" OF THE PALESTINIANS, THE SAME TERM THE U.S. USES.)

6. JUST PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE, MACEACHEN HAD TOLD EVRON THAT HIS VISIT HAD LED HIM TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE PROBLEMS OF THE MIDDLE EAST WERE MUCH MORE COMPLICATED THAN HE HAD THOUGHT. THERE DID NOT SEEM TO BE ANY SIMPLE ANSWERS, AND IT WAS EVIDENT THAT CONSIDERABLE TIME AND PATIENCE WERE REQUIRED. PERHAPS THE GRADUAL APPROACH WAS THE BEST ONE. EVRON SAID THAT HE HAD AGREED, AND HAD STRESSED THE DANGER OF TRYING TO RUSH INTO A SETTLEMENT WHICH WOULD ONLY LEAD TO GREATER PROBLEMS.

7. ONE POINT WHICH HAD INTERESTED THE ISRAELIS WAS MACEACHEN'S REMARK TO ALLON THAT LATE LAST YEAR ON A VISIT TO WEST AFRICA HE HAD NOTICED THAT SEVERAL OF THE COUNTRIES HAD A CERTAIN NOSTALGIA FOR THE ISRAELI PRESENCE, AND WERE LOOKING FORWARD TO THE TIME WHEN THE ISRAELI WOULD RETURN.

8. MACEACHEN TALKED TO THE PRESS WHILE HERE. HE CALLED ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT CANADA WAS ENGAGED IN THE MIDDLE EAST BECAUSE OF ITS UNITS SERVING WITH THE UNEF AND THE UNDOF, BUT CAUTIONED THAT THESE UN PEACE-KEEPING FORCES MUST NOT BECOME A SUBSTITUTE FOR EFFORTS TO REACH A PEACE SETTLEMENT. HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT DELEGATES OF THE PLO WILL ATTEND THE CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (HABITAT) IN VANCOUVER THIS YEAR, POINTEDLY ADDING THAT ISRAEL WOULD ALSO ATTEND (SUBSEQUENTLY CONFIRMED TO US BY THE MFA). IT WAS REPORTED THAT ALLON HAD DRAWN MACEACHEN'S ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT SEVERAL COUNTRIES HAD TAKEN LEGISLATIVE ACTION AGAINST THE ARAB BOYCOTT AND HINTED STRONGLY THAT CANADA MIGHT CONSIDER DOING LIKEWISE. MACEACHEN WAS SAID TO HAVE DUCKED
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THIS ISSUE, MERELY SAYING THAT IT WAS "UNDER CONSIDERATION."

9. COMMENT: CANADIAN DCM REMARKED TO EMBOFF THAT MACEACHEN WAS VERY TIRED WHEN HE ARRIVED HERE, AND IF WHAT HE HEARD DID NOT FIT IN WITH HIS PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS HE SIMPLY DID NOT ABSORB IT. MACEACHEN HAD COMMENTED TO THE CANADIAN DCM THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A "HARD LINE" FROM BOTH THE IRAQIS AND RABIN.

10. DESPITE CERTAIN ISRAELI NERVOUSNESS DUE TO MACEACHEN'S REPORTED REMARKS IN ARAB CAPITALS ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE, HIS VISIT HERE SEEMS TO HAVE GONE OFF QUITE WELL. PERHAPS A GOOD BAROMETER OF THE TRUE STATE OF CANADIAN-ISRAELI RELATIONS FOLLOWING THE VISIT WILL BE THE TALKS BETWEEN

EL AL AND CPA, WHICH MAY INDEED BE DIFFICULT.
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